

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

*A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy*

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September 22, 2006

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## **Fact Sheet: U.S. Outlines Challenges Facing U.N., International Community**

*Highlights work on Sudan, Iran, Lebanon, North Korea, Burma*

U.S. Department of State  
Bureau of Public Affairs  
September 21, 2006

### **U.S. POLICY IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL**

The United States looks to work with the United Nations, particularly with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), to address the varied challenges facing the international community.

#### *Ending the Genocide in Sudan*

As a result of the conflict in Darfur, which the United States has called a genocide, thousands of people have been killed, nearly 2 million internally displaced, and over 200,000 made refugees in Chad. With the African Union and other international partners, the United States led the way in achieving the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA), signed on May 5, 2006, between the largest rebel group and the Sudanese government. The UN Security Council issued a Presidential Statement on May 9, supporting the implementation of the DPA, and two UN Security Council Resolutions, 1679 and 1706. The latter resolution called for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force to Darfur. The United States is working intensively with other Security Council members to ensure that the transition of the African Union forces to a UN-led operation will take place as soon as possible.

#### *Nonproliferation and Iran*

Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons represents a threat to the entire international community. In defiance of repeated calls from the United Nations Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Iranian regime is continuing its nuclear program. The United States, with its international partners, will continue to make every effort to achieve a successful diplomatic outcome, but there must be consequences, such as Security Council sanctions, for Iran's continued defiance.

#### *A Lasting Peace in Lebanon*

The United States worked with the other members of the Security Council to establish conditions for a lasting peace in Lebanon. The enhancement of the UN peacekeeping operation in Lebanon will help the democratic Lebanese government to regain control over its territory. It also will

help to provide the conditions for the full implementation of Resolution 1559, which calls for the end of foreign interference in Lebanese internal affairs and for the disbanding and disarming of militias in Lebanon.

#### *Nonproliferation and North Korea*

In response to North Korea's launch of several ballistic missiles on July 5, 2006, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1695. The United States participated in and fully supported the Japanese-led efforts in making this resolution possible. In concert with its regional partners, the United States has urged the North Koreans to return without delay to the six-party talks for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. This would allow North Korea to gain economic assistance and security, and to integrate itself into the region.

#### *Burma*

In adding the issue of Burma to the UN Security Council's permanent agenda on September 15, 2006, UNSC members recognized the grave threat to regional stability posed by the Burmese military junta. The unconscionable human rights abuses visited by the junta upon its own people, nearly a million of whom have been internally displaced or turned into international refugees, are already destabilizing the region. In addition, the government has failed to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Burma and has turned a blind eye to the flourishing trafficking in human beings and narcotics. The international community must act now to stop Burma's abuse of its own people and its endangerment of peace in the region.

### **NATO Ministers Discuss Importance of Afghan Mission**

*Secretary Rice touts NATO as great source of security*

By Judy Aita

Washington File Staff Writer

New York -- Taking advantage of the opening of the 61st U.N. General Assembly to prepare for their summit later this year, NATO foreign ministers reaffirmed the importance of the mission in Afghanistan and emphasized the need to link security with economic development efforts, NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said September 21.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Daniel Fried said that the meeting provided an impetus for the November summit in Riga, Latvia, and "an important opportunity for us to remind ourselves and the world how important NATO is to our common security."

Secretary of State Condoleezza told the ministers that "in a world where our interests and our ideas are increasingly joined, in a world where our democratic principles are our greatest source of security, NATO remains one of the most important, effective, and remarkable alliances in history," Fried said.

The ministers had a "good discussion" of NATO's operations in Afghanistan, success in supporting reform and deepening democracy in Eastern Europe and help for African Union (AU) peacekeepers in Darfur, the U.S. assistant secretary said.

Scheffer said that prior to the session he met with President Denis Sasson-Nguesso of the Republic of Congo, current president of the African Union, to discuss NATO assistance for the AU force in Darfur, referred to as AMIS. Scheffer said he promised that he would "do everything I can to see that NATO can respond positively" to AU requests.

The AU decided on September 20 to remain in Darfur until the end of the year. The United Nations had intended to take over and strengthen peacekeeping operations in the devastated Sudanese province October 1, but the Sudanese government has refused to accept a U.N. operation.

Scheffer said NATO will not be contributing ground troops but will do "anything they might wish in support of this very important effort, in these very difficult circumstances," such as continuing to airlift troops and provide training.

Providing assistance to the African Union in Darfur will not require a decision by the NATO ministers, but can be handled in NATO's Brussels, Belgium, headquarters, with NATO ambassadors and military planners, he said.

"NATO, on the basis of its huge experience, can enable the AMIS force to continue to the end of the year to do its work," Scheffer said.

Fried said that the United States sees NATO assistance to the African Union "as another example of NATO's increasing role around the world. It can be called on for support in many places where NATO has not been present traditionally and is present today."

#### MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE IN AFGHANISTAN

Scheffer said that alliance countries have "stepped up to the plate" in providing help for Afghanistan, but more needs to be done.

He said Poland has pledged to send 1,000 more soldiers, Romania has offered 200 troops, and other nations are in the political process to see if they can contribute.

It also is important that "nations do more than they have done to lift their caveats" on what their troops can and cannot do, the secretary-general said.

Afghanistan is "NATO's first priority and most important operation and it is absolutely necessary that we do what we promised to do in filling the requirement for the force," Scheffer said.

NATO has about 20,000 troops in Afghanistan to help protect development and reconstruction teams, but has been clashing with Taliban guerrillas in the south. The United States has a separate force of about 20,000 under its own command fighting Taliban and al-Qaida forces.

"On Afghanistan there is a clear sense that the development efforts and development cooperation must be stepped up," Scheffer continued.

NATO can create the climate of stability and security -- which is a precondition for development, nation building and reconstruction, but development issues should receive more attention "because you will have no long-lasting stability without development," he said.

More attention should be paid to the country's serious narcotics problem, Scheffer said. Afghan officials must put emphasis on the drug problem, but the international community must also "see how we can most effectively and efficiently fight this scourge."

Fried praised NATO operations in southern Afghanistan.

"The Taliban seemed to assume that NATO would be weak and irresolute and could surge forward militarily in the south against what they thought were weaker allies. They were sadly mistaken in this," Fried said.

The ministers also discussed future NATO enlargement and what signal the allies might want to give nations in the western Balkans seeking membership, the secretary-general said. No decision was made, he said.

Scheffer said he had the impression that in the Riga, Latvia, summit the ministers will reaffirm their inclination to increase membership, "but certainly mention the need for continued performance for those nations who are aspiring for NATO membership."

**U.S. Urges Unfettered Political Participation in Thailand***State Department reiterates call for democratic rule*

By Jane Morse

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- The U.S. Department of State is calling for a return to democratic rule in Thailand and "unfettered" participation for media and all political parties.

Briefing reporters September 21, State Department acting spokesman Tom Casey said, "There must be a swift return to democratic rule. We do want to see a handover to civilian authorities as quickly as possible."

Casey called reports that coup leaders have banned political activities in Thailand "a setback."

Control of Thailand's government institutions was seized on September 19 by a group calling itself the Committee for Democratic Reform under the Monarchy as Head of State. This "committee" has declared martial law, pledged to name a civilian caretaker prime minister within two weeks, write a new constitution, and hold elections by October 2007.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was in New York attending the start of the United Nations' 61st General Assembly session at the time of the coup.

Thailand's aid from the United States is in jeopardy because of the coup, Casey said. Under Section 508 of the Foreign Operations Act for fiscal year 2006, appropriated funds may not be used to assist the government of any country whose duly elected head has been deposed by military coup or decree.

Approximately \$14 million in bilateral assistance has been earmarked for Thailand for the current fiscal year. Casey said a review is under way to determine which programs may be affected by the restrictions spelled out in Section 508.

**Mideast Quartet Endorses Palestinian Leader's Efforts***Rice says Palestinian government must be committed to peace*

By Judy Aita

Washington File United Nations Correspondent

United Nations -- The Quartet for Middle East peace September 20 endorsed the efforts of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to form a government of national unity and recognized the need to continue humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people.

The Quartet -- the United Nations, the European Union (EU), Russia and the United States -- "discussed and indeed welcomed the efforts of [Mahmoud Abbas] to deal with the difficult circumstances in the Palestinian Territories," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said after the meeting. "We noted again the importance of the formation of a Palestinian government that would be devoted to and respectful of the principles of the Quartet."

"You cannot have peace if you do not recognize the right of the other partner to exist and that the renunciation of violence is a key to negotiations," Rice said. "If indeed there is going to be a government that is able to govern, it needs the support of the international community and it needs to be committed to peace."

After a three-hour meeting, representatives of the Quartet -- U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Rice, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Finish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, EU Representative Javier Solana and European Commissioner for External Relations Benita Ferrero-Waldner -- issued an official statement reaffirming its "commitment to the road map as the means to realize the goal of two democratic states -- Israel and Palestine -- living side by side in peace and security."

"The Quartet welcomed the efforts of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to form a government of national unity, in the hope that the platform of such a government would reflect Quartet principles and allow for early engagement," the group said in an official statement issued after the meeting on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly.

The Quartet called for a three-month extension and the expansion of the "temporary international mechanism" created in June to channel aid to the Palestinians without going through the Hamas-led government. It also encouraged greater donor support to meet the needs of the Palestinian people, especially on security-sector reform, reconstruction of damaged infrastructure and economic development.

The Quartet also endorsed Annan's initiative to have James Wolfensohn, former World Bank president, report on the economic and humanitarian situation.

It has been difficult for the Hamas-led Palestinian government to deliver on its promises for a better life for the Palestinian people, Rice said.

"The Palestinians need a government that is committed to the decadelong effort between Palestinians and Israelis to find a route to peace, to commitments that have been taken on behalf of the Palestinian people, and quite simply, to a set of agreements that the international community indeed

supports," she said. "Until there is such, it's going to be very difficult for that government to function."

The statement is an indication of the strengthening of the common position among the members of the Quartet, a senior State Department official said. There is a realization collectively that the Hamas government is failing to meet its duties as a government and not subscribing to the principles of the Quartet. Those principles, reiterated in the communiqué, include the recognition of Israel's right to exist, the renunciation of violence and acceptance of all existing agreements between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

The official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, called the communiqué "a forthright statement of the criteria for any Palestinian government."

The official said the Hamas government has failed as yet to meet the standards set forth by the Quartet and shows no inclination to accept them.

The Quartet also encouraged Israel to consider transferring impounded Palestinian tax and customs revenue through the temporary international mechanism set up to improve the economic and humanitarian conditions in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel, which collects taxes and customs duties on goods destined for the Palestinian Territories, halted transfer of those tax revenues to the Palestinian government after Hamas took control earlier in 2006.

### **Text: U.S. Health Secretary Marks Progress Against Avian Flu**

*Statement comes on first anniversary of international flu partnership*

U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Mike Leavitt issued the following statement September 20 in recognition of the first anniversary of the formation of the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza.

Following is the text of the statement:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Press Release  
September 20, 2006

Statement by Mike Leavitt, Secretary of Health and Human Services

On the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, United Nations General Assembly

One year ago President Bush announced the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, an effort to bring together key nations and international organizations to improve the world's readiness for a possible human influenza pandemic.

Since that announcement, the global effort to prepare for and respond to a potential human influenza pandemic has gained momentum and strength. The International Partnership has been an important element in support of these global efforts to improve international disease surveillance, transparency in the reporting of cases, the timeliness of such reporting, and the response capabilities of affected nations.

In the past year, the H5N1 strain of avian flu has spread to more than 40 additional countries and has led to the deaths of hundreds of millions of additional birds, which has heightened concern about the potential for a human flu pandemic. Furthermore, the number of avian flu cases in humans has more than doubled to more than 240 cases in 10 countries. Tragically, more than half of those persons infected have died. This persistence of the avian flu virus to sustain itself and spread reminds us of the urgency to redouble our efforts to be ready should the avian flu virus evolve into a human pandemic.

In the United States, we have been making significant investments in vaccines, antivirals, and research. This research is likely to benefit not only citizens of the United States, but also citizens of the world.

Earlier this year, we recently awarded \$1.0 billion in contracts to develop cell-based vaccines against both seasonal and pandemic influenza with the goal of having sufficient domestic vaccine production capacity to vaccinate all Americans within 6 months of the declaration of a pandemic. In addition, we are working on dose-sparing measures to enable us to produce more treatment courses for more people and are developing a library of live virus vaccine candidates against all known influenza strains with pandemic potential. In addition, we have developed rapid diagnostic testing for H5 strains that shorten testing time. We are also looking at mitigation strategies should a pandemic break out.

But responding to a pandemic will demand the cooperation of the world community. No nation can go it alone. If a country is to protect its own people, it must work together with other nations to protect the people of the world.

I believe there are four principles of preparedness, and I have spoken of them before: transparency, rapid reporting, sharing of data, and scientific cooperation. The United States will do its part to advance those principles.



We are funding the Specimen Transport Fund, managed by the Secretariat of the World Health Organization (WHO). It is a key innovation in getting samples from affected countries in a timely and secure fashion. We also support early, voluntary compliance with the revised International Health Regulations. We also have made sizeable investments in creating a worldwide network of influenza surveillance, through bilateral assistance, work with the WHO Secretariat and its Regional Offices, and through partnerships with a number of international labs. Furthermore, in response to President Bush's commitment to forward-positioning a portion of U.S. antiviral stocks for use in a human pandemic containment effort, we have deployed treatment courses of Tamiflu to a secure location in Asia.

Today, I am pleased to renew our commitment to the International Partnership. It is our collective global resources and cooperation that will make our pandemic preparedness efforts a success and that will position us as a global community to better prepared tomorrow than we are today.

### **Kosovo Status Talks at Crucial Stage, Contact Group Says**

*Officials reaffirm support for negotiated settlement in 2006*

By Jeffrey Thomas

Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- With talks over Kosovo's final status at a "crucial stage," a group of government officials known as the Contact Group met September 20 and reaffirmed its commitment to a negotiated settlement for the province before the end of 2006. The group also warned both Serbia and Kosovo that neither party can block the status process from advancing.

Meeting in New York on the sidelines of the opening of the United Nations General Assembly, the Contact Group officials -- representing France, Germany, Italy, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States -- were joined by the NATO secretary-general and officials from the European Union and the United Nations, including U.N. Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari. U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice served as chair of the group.

The Contact Group, which has coordinated international action in the Balkans since 1994, reaffirmed its support for Ahtisaari, who has been leading the talks over the future status of Kosovo.

The United Nations has administered Kosovo since 1999,

when U.S. and NATO-led military forces fought and expelled Yugoslav Serb troops and police following human-rights abuses against the province's majority ethnic Albanian population. As many as half of Kosovo's ethnic Serbs are believed to have fled since the fighting, and NATO forces today protect minority-Serb communities and religious sites. Serbs maintain that Kosovo is central to their cultural heritage because of its historic sites and shrines.

Kosovo could emerge from the U.N.-sponsored talks as an independent country or retain its status as an autonomous province of Serbia, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said.

In a short briefing after the Contact Group meeting, Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried said the ministers "expressed, with unanimity and considerable conviction, support for his [Ahtisaari's] efforts."

Fried said he wanted to emphasize a few points made in the joint statement issued after the meeting by the Contact Group: "Ministers reaffirmed their commitment that all possible efforts be made to achieve a negotiated settlement in the course of 2006. In other words, they are adhering to the timeline of seeking to chart the way forward this year."

He added that the Contact Group "also agreed that striving for a negotiated settlement should not obscure the fact that neither party can unilaterally block the status process from advancing."

"That's a very important point of agreement" by the Contact Group, Fried said.

Fried said the government ministers also urged the "quasi-government in Kosovo to accelerate the efforts to implement U.N.-endorsed standards."

The standards, first outlined by the United Nations in 2002, include functioning democratic institutions, rule of law, freedom of movement, refugee return, economic progress, respect for property rights, dialogue with Belgrade, and a properly constituted Kosovo Protection Corps with minority participation.

In addition, the ministers "called on Belgrade to cease its obstruction of Kosovo Serb participation in Kosovo's institutions," Fried said. Belgrade is the capital of Serbia.

The Contact Group's statement voices support for "a realistic outcome that enhances regional stability, is acceptable to the people of Kosovo and preserves Kosovo's multi-ethnic character."

The statement also says the ministers "encouraged the

Special Envoy to prepare a comprehensive proposal for a status settlement and on this basis to engage the parties in moving the negotiating process forward."

"The ministers are determined to see this through," Fried said. "All the ministers expressed realism about the difficulties, but a determination to work together to advance this process."

"I think it's fair to say we were all satisfied with the meeting, the continued international determination to see this process through," he said.

### **U.S., Europe Working Together To Combat Drug Trafficking**

*U.S. drug enforcement official outlines cooperation in addressing global threat*

Washington -- Illicit drugs are a global menace, and the United States and Europe are working together to curb the increased flow of these drugs from South America to Europe, says Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Chief of Operations Michael Braun.

In September 21 testimony before two House subcommittees, Braun said that since the early 1990s, Europe has experienced a significant increase in the amount of cocaine trafficked from South America. DEA investigations have shown that the same Colombian organizations that are smuggling cocaine to Europe are also smuggling to the United States, so it is "vitally important" that the United States and Europe coordinate their counternarcotics efforts, he added.

To this end, Braun said, the DEA has forged a strong and cooperative relationship with its European counterparts, maintaining offices in 11 European countries with approximately 60 DEA employees. As an example of this cooperation, Braun pointed to Operation Twin Ocean, a three-year effort. And as part of this effort, he said, the DEA worked with law enforcement agencies in Colombia, Panama, Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, Spain and Great Britain to arrest more than 100 individuals, and seize more than 47 tons of cocaine and nearly \$70 million in assets in May.

Braun explained that the DEA has a particularly close relationship with the United Kingdom's Serious Organized Crime Agency (SOCA), with numerous ongoing joint operations as well as the recent completion of Operation White Dollar. As part of this operation, the DEA and SOCA worked with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service as well as Colombian and Canadian officials to dismantle an

international money-laundering ring that laundered millions of Colombian drug dollars in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. The operation resulted in 34 arrests and the forfeiture of \$20 million in laundered funds, Braun said.

The DEA is also active in other parts of Europe, Braun said. He pointed out that the DEA has two special agents with the Royal Dutch National Police National Crime Squad in the Netherlands, and said the DEA and Spanish law enforcement also continuously are working on joint investigations into cocaine smuggling.

These and other DEA's collaborative efforts with its European counterparts will continue as part of the Bush administration's strategy to address the global menace of illicit drugs, Braun said.

"We recognize that interagency and multinational cooperation are essential elements of the president's National Drug Control Strategy, and these cooperative efforts are the best way for us to dismantle and disrupt international drug-trafficking organizations," he said. "DEA will continue to work tirelessly to enhance the effectiveness of our enforcement operations in order to curtail the flow of drugs to both the United States and Europe."

(Preceding items distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)